

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR VE

SUBJ: OVERVIEW OF SECRETARY'S TRIP AND THE FOLLOW-UP

REF: STATE 61171

1. THE INITIAL EFFECT HERE HAS BEEN TO LEND A MEASURE OF CREDIBILITY TO OUR INSISTENCE THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO DIALOGUE, TO TREAT THIRD - WORLD AND LATIN AMERICAN CONCERNS SERIOUSLY AND TO SUPPORT REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION. THE PRESIDENT AND HIS COLLEAGUES WERE IMPRESSED AND HEARTENED BY WHAT THE SECRETARY HAD TO SAY PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY-- PARTICULARLY ABOUT SELA. BUT THEY ARE PROBABLY NO MORE THAN HALF-PERSUADED. FOR A LASTING IMPACT WE WILL HAVE TO PRODUCE A POSITIVE RESPONSE TO THEIR DESIRE FOR CONCRETE US-VENEZUELAN COOPERATION IN WHAT THE PRESIDENT CALLS THE "INTEGRATIONIST PROCESS." THAT MEANS IN MY VIEW A VISIBLE US CONTRIBUTION TO ONE OR MORE PROJECTS OF THE TYPE PEREZ PROPOSED IN AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP AID -- OR THAT GUMERSINDO RODRIGUEZ AND HECTRO HURTADO SUGGESTED WITH RESPECT TO EFFORTS IN THE ENERGY FIELD. IT WILL NOT BE EASY.

2. FAILING SUCH A RESPONSE WE WILL BE LEFT WITH NOTHING WORSE THAN A MODERATE DEGREE OF CYNICISM ABOUT THE REAL IMPORT OF THE TTRIP AND OUR MOTIVES IN STAGING IT. THE GOV AND THE VENEZUELAN PUBLIC WERE PLEASED TO HAVE THE
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PAGE 02 CARACA 03024 171934Z

SECRETARY HERE AND GENERALLY SEEM TO THINK THE VISIT

WAS A CONSIDERABLE PERSONAL SUCCESS FOR THE SECRETARY. BUT THEIR EXPECTATIONS WERE NOT NOTABLY HIGH AND NO DRAMATIC CONSEQUENCES WILL FLOW IF WE ARE UNABLE TO FOLLOW THRU IN VERZ VIGOROUS FASHION. THE CYNICSISM MOSTEVIDENT IN THE REACTION TO THE BRAZILIAN STOP. THE PRESIDENT AND HIS COLLEAGUES ARE NOT SO UNSOPHISTICATED OR ILL INFORMED AS TO FIND CREDIBLE IN POLITICAL TERMS THE PROSPECT OF A "US-BRAZIL AXIS". WHAT THEY DO SUSPECT IS THAT WE MAY HARBOR THE NOTION OF DISRUPTING LATIN AMERICAN AND THIRD-WORLD SOLIDARITY BY FEEDING BRAZILIAN AMBITIONS FOR SPECIAL AND EVEN GREAT-POWER STATUS. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT OUR ESTABLISHMENT OF FORMAL CONSULTATIVE MACHINERY WITH BRAZIL HAS PROBABLY MADE A SVMILAR ARRANGEMENT WITH THIS COUNTRY POLITICALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE TIME BEING-- WHICH COULD BE ALL TO THE GOOD IF WE CAN INTENSIFY THE PRIVATE, INFORMAL DIALOGUE BY IDENTIFYING AREAS FOR COOPERATIVE ACTION.

3. BECAUSE OF ITS TIMING THE VISIT SERVED TO DRAMATIZE FOR THE VENEZUELAN PUBLIC THE ISSUE OF CUBAN INTERVENTIONISM. THERE HAS BEEN A MANIFEST HARDENING OF ATTITUDES TOWARD CUBA AND A TENDENCY ON THE PART OF THE POLITICIANS TO SPEAK OUT MORE BOLDLY ON CASTRO'S ADVENTURISM. I STILL THINK, HOWEVER, THAT THE GOV HOPES THAT FIDEL CAN BE PERSUADED TO MEND HIS WAYS IN THE INTERESTS OF LATIN AMERICAN SOLIDARITY AND THAT PEREZ WILL BE CAREFUL NOT TO CLOSE THE DOOR BY WORD OR DEED.

4. I HAVE AVOIDED THE SOFT SOAP AS YOU INSTRUCTED. BUT I DO WANT TO OBSERVE THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT CONSEQUENCE MIGHT WELL TURN OUT TO BE THE SECRETARY'S PERSONAL IMPACT ON CARLOS ANDRES. AS YOU KPOW, THE INTANGIBLE ASPECTS OF THE KIND OF INTERACTION THAT TOOK PLACE BETWEEN THEM CAN BE IMPORTANT INDEED IN LATIN AMERICA. SHLAUDEMAN

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